

SWEBOK Knowledge Area : Software Requirements

Focus:

This knowledge area is defined as the process that is concerned with the elicitation, analysis, specification, and validation of software requirements. Success of any given software development project depends on having complete and comprehensive requirement of every aspect of the software that being developed. This area requires much interaction between the different stockholder of the project. There is highest level customer input at this stage before them getting involved again in the last stages of the project.

Major Steps:

The stakeholder's of the development project are identifies initially to facilitation the remainder of the process. All of these stakeholders are interview to obtain what is commonly know as the major user stories or main requirements. These initial steps are usually done by BA's or Business Analysts. The goals of the development project are agreed upon by all the stakeholders. High level design specifications are drawn up along with detailed use cases that refer back to the user stories.

Sometimes, depending on the type of project, prototypes are created to quickly access if the prospective users and developers are on the same page as far as the expectations of the end product. I say this is only in some cases because, not all software development project have a user interface, and hence might not require any kind of prototyping.

Experience:

In my experience, gathering good requirements is very important for a project, but I have often noticed them to be the most difficult of all the following process stages of Software Development. There are many barriers that the initial team has to overcome to gather good requirements, namely: language/terminology differences, experiences differences, industry standards etc.